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February 27, 2014

UNH Corporate Sustainability Leadership Program Kicks Off Next Session April 2-4

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire Corporate Sustainability Leadership Program, which focuses on the tools, techniques and solutions for implementing environmentally and socially responsible business practices, will hold its next session April 2-4, 2014.

Formerly known as the Institute for Corporate Sustainability, the Corporate Sustainability Leadership Program is directed toward mid-level and senior professionals seeking to increase knowledge and functional skills in the practices and principles of corporate sustainability. It is a collaboration of the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics, the UNH Sustainability Institute and the New Hampshire Businesses for Social Responsibility.

“The program is based on the core premise rapidly being adopted by leading global companies that businesses can continue to drive profitable growth for the shareholders while also helping address some of the major challenges we face as a society by incorporating sustainability concepts into their core business strategy and operations,” said Fiona Wilson, faculty director for the program and assistant professor of strategy, sustainability and social entrepreneurship at Paul College.

“We have designed this program to help participants take away not just new insights, but also practical and actionable tools and frameworks to help them immediately drive toward key sustainability initiatives and goals in their organizations,” Wilson said.

Topics cover a wide range of sustainability concepts, including understanding the impact of climate change on the New England business environment and building resilient organizations, supply chain thinking, stakeholder engagement, and triple bottom line accounting and reporting.

Participants may attend only the three-day program on the Durham campus or can complete a capstone project in their workplace. Capstone projects address the real-world sustainability needs of their employers. Those who attend the program and complete a capstone project receive a Certificate in Corporate Sustainability.

For Matt Haas of IDEXX Laboratories, his capstone project focused on an immediate return on investment. “I walked away from the institute with a completely changed perspective on how we manage sustainability at IDEXX,” Haas said.

“As a result of a session on creating shared value, we have aligned our sustainability initiatives to our recently revised corporate mission: to be a great company that creates exceptional long-term value for our customers, employees, and shareholders by enhancing the health and well-being of pets, people, and livestock. This has enabled me to get buy-in from senior leaders. We are actively working on getting dedicated staff and resources to support sustainability related projects and reporting,” he said.

Past capstone projects have included enhancing community assistance programs with energy efficiency audits, identifying opportunities for making solar power affordable for all businesses, developing a business plan focused on the human aspects of social responsibility, developing marketing programs to help consumers clearly identify eco-friendly product attributes, understanding the challenges and opportunities in community-based sustainability efforts and creating the connection between an industry embattled in eco-issues with opportunities for healing.

“We introduced the Certificate in Corporate Sustainability program in 2011 to address an expressed desire by business professionals for opportunities to expand their understanding of corporate sustainability beyond what can be attained in a one-day conference, without committing to a full sustainability MBA program,” said Michelle Veasey, executive director of the New Hampshire Businesses for Social Responsibility.

“The program provides the best of both worlds, providing access to the latest thinking in environmental and social responsibility combined with access to leading business practitioners. We’ve been inspired by what participants have been able to achieve back in their professional environments, as demonstrated by their capstone projects,” Veasey said.

For more information, visit <http://www.sustainabilitycertificate.org/> or contact Kelsey Sobel, executive development program coordinator, UNH Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics, at 603-862-1998 or kelsey.sobel@unh.edu

The New Hampshire Businesses for Social Responsibility builds and supports a network of businesses in the state and region committed to adopting socially responsible business practices, recognizing that people, principles, and profits are inseparably linked. The organization provides varied educational and networking opportunities to encourage the expansion of sustainable business practices in the state. More information can be found at www.nhbsr.org.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students. Home to the oldest endowed sustainability program in U.S. higher education, the UNH Sustainability Institute, UNH is an award-winning leader in integrating sustainability across curriculum, operations, research and engagement. Learn more at www.sustainableunh.unh.edu.

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